

15th International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames	
Washington, D.C. – October 22 – 26, 2001	
<div style="text-align: right;">Session No 2 Paper No 12</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Hilda van der Stoep, Gösta Nilsson, Statistics South Africa, South Africa</div>	
Progress Report	

Status and update on progress

1. The implementation of the business frame system was finalised by the end of the year 2000. Some enhancements and adjustments are still in progress. The training of staff on the system commenced in August this year.
2. The manual parts of the maintenance routines are still under development. These include procedures for the creation of the statistical units i.e. the enterprise unit, the kind-of-activity unit and the geographic unit (local-kind-of-activity unit). The procedure design has as goal the involvement of all the staff members and runs parallel with extensive training on the frame usage and its influence on the quality of the statistical output. This approach, perhaps more time consuming than it would otherwise have been, is used to increase the understanding of maintenance and maintenance objectives.
3. A survey of 40 000 economically significant enterprises covering all sectors was initiated in November 2000 and is continuing. The objectives of the survey are to improve the quality of the industrial classifications, contact information and to clarify the structures of the enterprises selected. In a first step these businesses were contacted by telephone, whereby their contact information was confirmed and they were separated into three main groups; single location enterprises, multi location enterprises with a maximum of 15 local units and multi location enterprises with more than 15 local units. The single location enterprises were asked to also provide information on their activity, number of employees and turnover. Depending on the complexity of the enterprise one of three questionnaires were either posted or faxed to the respondent based on their preference. Of the 40 000 enterprises included in the sample approximately 6000 enterprises appear to be untraceable. These are most likely ceased or dormant enterprises. From the data collected during the telephone exercise it appears that there are approximately 5000 multi location unit enterprises among those successfully contacted.
4. A number of different administrative sources that could possibly be included on the business frame (BF) have now been evaluated and their usage for maintenance prioritised. Based on coverage, timeliness and other quality factors it has been decided that Value Added Tax and Income Tax databases at the South African Revenue Services (SARS) should be the primary source used. The lack of a common identifier is a great hindrance when using many different sources. Another reason to defer the use of other sources is the development of an Interdepartmental Business Register (IBR, see below). This register is expected to become at least one of the main sources that can replace other candidate sources.
5. VAT data is being delivered monthly since May this year and a reception system has been developed. The edits for the VAT data produce approximately a thousand investigation cases each month.
6. Income Tax database has up till now been used to determine the coverage of the BF and the VAT system. The most significant non-matches on the Income Tax database are currently being investigated. As mentioned previously the lack of a common identifier plays an important role in the below average matching results.
7. The previous Business Address Register (BAR) at Stats SA had nice features for managing send-outs and remainders that effectively also could handle several alternative addresses for each survey using the BAR. The BF will also be equipped with similar facilities through a survey management sub system, in which deviating (from the statistical units) observation and reporting units can be managed. A first version of the survey management sub system has been implemented and is about to go into production. Before that happens, information from the old BAR will be transferred onto the survey management (sub-) database.

8. The first sample based on the BF was drawn in November 2000 and further samples followed early 2001. The samples have been drawn only on enterprise level, since the frame quality at sub unit levels is still questionable. New sampling procedures, using permanent random numbers have been outlined and partly implemented in SAS and EXCEL.
9. The development of the IBR (see below) and the utilization of SARS databases as main sources for the BF have led to a close and fruitful co-operation between SARS and Stats SA on the one hand but also with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on the other hand. At present personnel from SARS are placed at the office of Stats SA for more efficient exchange of knowledge and skills and the IBR and the BF share IT-resources. Twice monthly meetings are held within the IBR where management from the three organizations represents their organisation. There have also been discussions on placing Stats SA staff at SARS.
10. Stats SA have committed to quality management according to TQM principles. Consultants from other countries have been invited to assist in the implementation of the TQM principles. During 14 - 16 November a quality workshop lead by Westat, USA will be held. This workshop will be based on two or three pilot projects, one of which is the project for the development of maintenance routines for the BF.
11. The need for a multipurpose, government-wide business register was realized some years ago and DTI, the Department of Labour (DL), SARS and Stats SA agreed to embark on the development of such a register. A project was launched in 1998 with representatives from the parties mentioned. The project has been going on since then with SARS and Stats SA as the most active parties. The possible sources at SARS and DTI and the BF at Stats SA have been used to create a first version of the IBR that is now also available on Internet. The project recently got a "new start" with higher intensity, assistance and financing from Norway in setting up the legal and organisational framework for the IBR.

Issues and problems resolved during the past year

12. Discussed above.

Issues and problems unresolved during the past year

13. A common identifier.
14. Delineation of the sub units KAU and GEO and sources for their maintenance.
(Rules, sources, maintenance?)
15. BF surveys.
(Which and what?)
16. Data collection from farmers.
17. A generalised sampling system.
(Not only a technological and methodological problem but also an organizational issue. Who will be responsible for what? Unclear situation because of the ongoing reorganization and focus on the census)
18. Set the role of the BF within the organization and within the National Statistical System (NSS).
(Is the BF going to be used for sampling or will sample maintenance still be the dominant approach? Will the BF be available for external producers of statistics and if so what are the implications?)

Future plans

19. Generalisation of a sampling system.
(Integration of sampling methodology and other necessary sampling features for sample design, sample allocation and distribution of samples to survey areas are issues)
20. Finalise the survey management system.
(Decide also on who is responsible for what information)
21. Introduce regular quality management.
(TQM approach)
22. Documentation
(Description of BF contents, maintenance procedures, quality management, quality etc.)
23. Newsletter
(Monthly?)